

Calf colostrum update

Our youngstock service is underway with a number of farms having regular visits from George and Dru. The programme focuses on calf health and growth to maximise performance and profit margins along with reduction of disease and improving shed design.

We had a great response to the calf blood sampling for colostrum intakes and have managed to start building a picture of the farms within the practice. It is fair to say that there were a “range” of results from calves on individual farms and also between farms, along with an even wider variety of excuses!!!

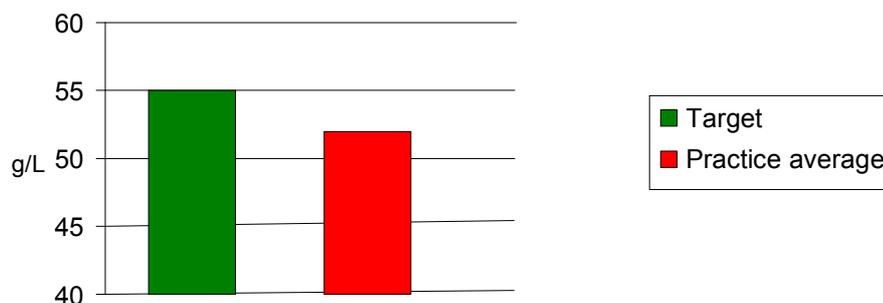


The award for best results goes to Messrs Vigar and Son at Pomeroy Farm. All calves sampled had good or adequate transfer of immunity due to excellent colostrum management.

Attention to detail is key:

- 3-4 litres of colostrum ASAP after birth
- Offer the bottle 1st and tube if necessary
- Check colostrum quality with a colostrometer
- 2nd colostrum feed within 12 hours where possible

We will continue to collect bloods from calves less than a week old to aid monitoring of the situation. Please speak to your routine vet or contact the practice if you would like more information about our youngstock scheme.



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Calf feeding

An interesting article has been printed in British Dairying (April 2015) which some of you may have seen, discussing some interesting results from a feed trial in New Zealand highlighting benefits on health and performance of calves fed from teats which feed the milk more slowly. The trial compared a slower feeding teat versus a faster feeding teat with an internal one-way valve. The trial showed that in calves that were fed on the slower feeding teats there was better absorption of lactose (energy), lower numbers of calves cross suckling, decreased nutritional scours and a significantly higher average daily weight gain.

Slower feeding causes calves to produce more saliva which is needed to form the milk clot in the abomasum, this is then broken down slowly throughout the day giving a slower release of energy to the calf. Cross suckling after feeding often occurs at the navel or juvenile udder. This is particularly important in dairy heifers as cross suckling can result in the removal of the keratin plug that protects the teat end from bacteria, increasing the risks of heifer mastitis in those calves. One of our clients is currently trying some of the slower feeding teats and early signs are showing promising results amongst that group compared to the rest on the standard faster feeding teats.

Garston Vets v Farmers Cricket

With the cricket season up and running the time is nearly upon us again for the most epic of clashes – Garston Vets vs Farmers. The date is Friday the 14th August with the game start aiming for 6pm at Frome Cricket Club. Garston vets will be looking to follow up last years convincing victory with another fine display of cricket nous, led by our very own Chris Mangham.



Greg's Useless Facts

The cuckoo only makes it's distinctive call in the UK prior to mating. Even more astonishing is that the birds overwinter in the Congo often within a few miles of each other, despite traveling 3000 miles to get there. Who needs a sat nav ?



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